

Hartford Revaluation

The most difficult issue for me this session was the passage of a special property tax relief program for Hartford. Without it, residential property taxpayers would have faced a dramatic increase in taxes next July. We could not allow that to happen. The result is not ideal but it will limit tax increases to a more reasonable amount over the next five years.



Dear Friend,

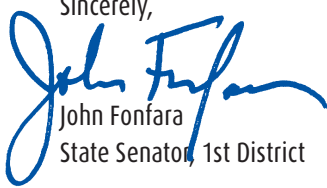
On May 3rd, the 2006 legislative session came to a close. Despite being the shortest possible session—only 85 days—the General Assembly passed significant initiatives to make Connecticut a better place to work, live, and educate our children. However, this newsletter focuses almost exclusively on my efforts on behalf of Hartford and Wethersfield. As a state legislator I must work and vote on matters of statewide

importance, but my primary responsibility is to make Wethersfield and Hartford the best communities each can be. I will post this year's most significant statewide initiatives that are not mentioned here on my Capitol Web site (see below).

This past winter, we all struggled with dramatically higher costs to heat our homes and put gasoline in our tanks. I recognize these higher costs are devastating for the poorest in our community, but they are difficult for all of us. Why the higher costs? Increasing worldwide demand for oil and natural gas, natural disasters (such as Hurricane Katrina), speculation by energy market participants, and—potentially—price gouging.

Most of these factors are out of our control at the state level. As co-chair of the Energy and Technology Committee, I am working to find solutions that are within our control. Most of my work centers on two general approaches: conserving energy, and creating alternatives to oil and natural gas. This session I worked to design a smart and forward thinking energy policy for Connecticut that would create new electric generation facilities that are more efficient. It won't happen soon, but eventually this effort will stabilize and possibly lower electricity costs. I also worked to develop incentives for ethanol, bio-diesel and other Connecticut-based alternative energy sources.

Our energy problems are complex, but a silver lining associated with higher costs is that it forces us to develop alternatives. The higher the cost, the more support for approaches that previously wouldn't have been considered. We will never again see 29¢ a gallon gasoline or electricity bills that will allow us to keep all the lights on, but Connecticut can do more to control our energy costs. I am committed to that goal.

Sincerely,

John Fonfara
State Senator, 1st District

Stay Informed...

For the latest information on the issues affecting our district, please visit my Web site:
www.senatedems.ct.gov/Fonfara.html



Defibrillators at Public Golf Courses

I was pleased to sponsor and secure passage of legislation that will require that all public golf courses have an automatic defibrillator on site and a staff member trained to use it as of October 1st of this

year. This is a fitting memorial to a South End friend, Ed Cheever, who suffered a heart attack last fall after a round at his beloved Goodwin Park Golf Course, and might still be with us had a defibrillator been available.

New Bonding Commitments

While no bonding bill was adopted prior to this newsletter being printed, I have requested and expect to obtain funding for the following projects:

- **Hartford**
 - \$350,000: Lozada Park renovations
 - \$500,000: new South End Senior Center
 - \$300,000: Goodwin Park passive recreation
- **Wethersfield**
 - \$400,000: in support of the Keane Foundation's project to upgrade the Wethersfield Community Center gym area
 - \$500,000: Silas Deane Highway enhancement

Cable Competition Coming

Cable television subscribers have long complained about high cable TV rates and a lack of competition for cable companies. Well, that may be about to change. Recently the DPUC, the people who regulate telecommunications in Connecticut, issued a decision which will very likely mean that at least one major telephone company will begin development of a new video system to compete head to head with the cable companies. Competition has been a huge success in telecommunications, especially for cell phones and internet services, driving down rates and creating more choices. My hope is that real competition will have the same effect on cable rates and choices.



I'm proud
to represent the
1st state
Senate District
which includes
the communities
of Hartford and
Wethersfield

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CONNECTICUT'S ENERGY FUTURE

2006 Legislative Initiatives

STATE SENATOR JOHN FONFARA 1ST DISTRICT

WETHERSFIELD COVE

Working closely with Wethersfield leaders, we have succeeded in getting the MDC to include in their major water quality improvement plan the removal of the Cove as an untreated sewage overflow point.



During the 2006 legislative session, the Energy and Technology Committee worked on legislation to help lower energy costs statewide, encourage conservation measures and provide incentives for the production and use of alternative energy. Although time ran out before this proposal could be voted on during the session, I am continuing to work with other legislators this summer to craft a long-term, comprehensive energy policy for our state.

Highlights of the proposed initiative include:

- **Energy efficient furnace replacement program:** A \$500 rebate for the installation of residential boilers and furnaces that are at least 85% efficient.
- **Air conditioning replacement program:** A two-year pilot program to provide a \$500 grant to residential customers who replace their central air conditioning unit that does not meet federal Energy Star efficiency standards with one that does.
- **Green Building Standards:** A requirement that certain new state-funded construction projects, including schools, meet energy and environmental standards. For school construction projects, the state will cover 100% of the additional costs attributable to meeting these standards.
- **Alternate Fuel Initiatives:** As a nation we are addicted to petroleum. The price of gas has skyrocketed; we are all feeling that. This bill offers incentives to produce alternative fuels to be used in Connecticut. Ethanol and bio-diesel are just two examples of alternative fuels we can and will produce in our state.
- **Natural Gas and Oil Conservation Programs:** Requires the utilities gross receipts tax to fund the natural gas companies' annual conservation plans. The amount will be based on the growth in that tax over the revenue estimate for that year, subject to a \$10 million per year cap. The monies raised under this fund will be used to replace inefficient furnaces, motors and other machinery with more efficient natural gas and oil-powered machinery.



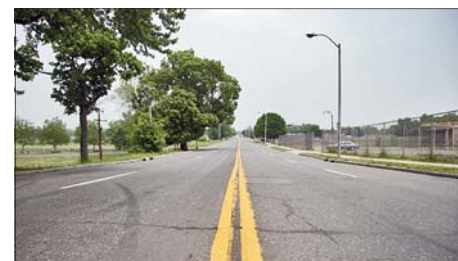
Working for Our Neighborhoods

South Hartford Alliance

The South Hartford Alliance is a coalition of all of the South End's neighborhood groups and merchant organizations. I was able to obtain funding of \$125,000 each year for the next two years, allowing the SHA to hire staff to coordinate and implement their efforts on such issues as public safety and better communication with police, which should result in a better quality of life for all residents and businesses.

Convention Shuttle Bus Service to South End, Parkville and West End

I am pleased to announce \$100,000 in state funds that will allow for the start of a new shuttle bus service this summer to bring conventioners from the five downtown hotels to restaurants and shops anywhere in the South End, the West End, Parkville and the Park Street corridor. Merchants on Franklin Avenue, Maple Avenue, Wethersfield Avenue, Park Street, Farmington Avenue, Prospect Avenue, Sisson Avenue and beyond will benefit from this great new service.



Drag Racing

Drag racing has been a serious concern for Hartford residents and business owners for many years. In an effort to eliminate this long-standing problem, I proposed and got passed a new law prohibiting drag racing that will give police the tools they need to put an end to this dangerous practice.



Motor Vehicle Registration Stickers

Many people in Hartford have resorted to putting their plates in the rear window of their car in order to prevent the theft of their registration stickers. In cooperation with Hartford police I asked the state Department of Motor Vehicles to find a solution to this problem. I am pleased to report that before the end of the summer, DMV will begin issuing stickers to be placed in the windshield of cars rather than on the license plate in order to prevent these thefts.

Breakthrough Magnet School

The new home for Breakthrough Magnet School will be ready for occupancy by the start of school next September. Being built with \$29.5 million in state funding that I helped secure, this state-of-the-art new building will allow the pre-K through 8th grade school to expand enrollment to 340 students.

A. I. Prince Technical School

With \$72 million in state funding, A. I. Prince Technical High School is being completely renovated with a new academic building, trade shops, advanced technology and a combination soccer-football field and track. The academic building will be ready to open next fall with the completion of entire project by January, 2008. Hartford's fourth high school is finally getting the attention it deserves.



Wethersfield Skate Park a Reality

A remarkable group of young people had a dream, and that dream is now a reality. With \$100,000 in state funds to support the \$160,000 project, the Robert Allen Keeney Skate Park opened last October to rave reviews. Skateboarders now come from all over New England to use this great new park.



Brick Hollow Breaks Ground

Ten buildings on Zion and Park Streets are presently undergoing renovation to provide 50 units of income-restricted housing for Hartford residents. With the hard work and support of Tom Cicalone at the Department of Economic and Community Development, I was pleased to help secure \$3.6 million in state funding to make this project a reality and help turn previously blighted buildings into beautiful new 2- and 3-bedroom apartments.

Park Street—Safe and Beautiful

Working together with Julio Mendoza and the Spanish American Merchants Association, I succeeded in obtaining \$1 million in state funding to allow the installation of 48 security cameras along Park Street, from Main Street

to Park Terrace, and in both Pope Park and Barnard Park in the South Green. In addition to the security cameras, facades will be completely replaced in 8 buildings between Hungerford and Oak Streets. Park Street is one of the most exciting streets in our city, and we're working to make it one of the safest.

Institute for the Hispanic Family to Get New Home

I was proud to work together with Representative Evelyn Mantilla to obtain \$2 million in state bonding funds for the construction of a new facility for the Institute for the Hispanic Family. The new building on Cedar Street will provide a wide range of culturally competent mental health and family counseling services for the local Hispanic community. Over 1,000 families each year benefit from the Child Guidance Clinic, Family Counseling Unit, the Hispanic Elderly Program, the Domestic Violence and Substance Abuse Programs.



Tax Credit for Renovation of Historic Buildings

Many of you know that the beautiful Capewell building, a former horseshoe nail factory, has been vacant for years. Now a new tax credit that I worked hard to pass for the past two sessions will go a long way toward saving this Hartford treasure. I look forward to the day when we will see people living in Capewell and in the Colt-Gateway complex, another old industrial site that could benefit from this legislation.